



SUMMARY MINUTES

Delta Protection Commission Meeting Thursday, July 18, 2019

Stockton Council Chamber
425 N. El Dorado Street, 2nd Floor
Stockton, CA 95202

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Villegas called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commission Clerk Ashley (Medina) Alatorre called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Villegas, Commissioners Winn, Burgis, Thomson, Kott, Nakanishi, Biagi Jr., Sandeen (for Cabaldon), Slater (for van Loben Sels), and Eddy (for Ross). Commissioner Moosavi arrived at 5:33 p.m., Vice Chair Nottoli arrived at 5:44 p.m., and Commissioner Bugsch arrived at 6:09 p.m. Commissioners Mussi and Crowfoot were absent with no alternate present. Commissioner Moosavi left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Chair Villegas welcomed new Alternate Commissioner Beverly Sandeen (West Sacramento City Councilmember representing cities in Sacramento and Yolo counties) and congratulated Commission Clerk Alatorre on her recent marriage and her new position with the California Department of Real Estate, beginning July 31.

3. Welcome and Public Comment- Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Villegas asked for public comment: Deirdre DesJardins (physicist at CA Water Research) stated independent experts were concerned about tunneling in gas fields and wanted to make sure the Commission was aware that DWR didn't have expertise in dealing with abandoned gas wells.

Executive Director Vink requested that agenda item #10 (Commission comment letter on transfer of Staten Island property) be deferred to a later meeting date. Chair Villegas agreed to defer agenda item #10.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Approval of May 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Burgis and seconded by Commissioner Moosavi to approve the May 16, 2019 meeting minutes; in a voice vote, the motion passed with 7 aye votes (Chair Villegas, Burgis, Kott, Nakanishi, Biagi, Moosavi, and Eddy), 0 nay votes, and 4 abstentions (Winn, Thomson, Sandeen, and Slater).

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Receive Executive Director Report

Executive Director Vink mentioned the recent Delta Lodging Workshop and Delta Heritage Forum were successful and will continue to hold more in the future; stated the Commission is working with the National Park Service to execute a National Heritage Area Cooperative Agreement, allowing the Commission to receive federal funding; reminded the Commission that new “Welcome to the Delta” signs are expected to be installed throughout the Delta in the fall; provided an update on staff activities related to the proposed update of the Land Use and Resource Management Plan; stated the ESP Recreation and Tourism update consultant agreement was awarded to The Dangermond Group on June 5; mentioned recent activities related to Governor Newsom’s Water Resilience Portfolio; mentioned the Commission will be looking for volunteers for the upcoming Delta Waterway Cleanup on September 21; reported on the Commission’s website and social media metrics; and reminded everyone to vote for Best of the Delta categories on the www.visitcadelta.com website.

Chair Villegas asked for public comment and there was none.

6. Receive Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Report

DPAC Chair Mark Pruner provided a brief update on the Committee’s July 8 meeting, where they received a report on the Delta Recreation Preferences and Tourism Study and focused on revision to the DPAC charter to allow for staggered member terms.

Executive Director Vink mentioned that Commission staff will soon solicit applications for a vacant DPAC position (conservation and habitat entity representative) and an open term for a recreation representative, and that he intends to bring suggested appointments and proposed revisions to the DPAC charter to the Commission’s September 19 meeting.

Chair Villegas asked for public comment and there was none.

7. Receive Presentation on Update to Economic Sustainability Plan-Agriculture Chapter

Dr. Jefferey Michael from the University of the Pacific provided a presentation on key findings of agricultural economic data trends, agricultural economic impacts from conservation and ecosystem restoration projects, salinity impacts on Delta agriculture, and how climate change may impact agricultural production in the Delta.

A number of Commission members asked for clarification on different items, with many comments expressing concern over the message delivered on how salinity may be affecting Delta agriculture. It was suggested that this incomplete report be reviewed further; Executive Director Vink stated that Commission staff will review the entirety of the consultant reports and prepare a summarization of the information for possible transmittal to the Delta Stewardship Council for inclusion in the Delta Plan.

Chair Villegas asked for public comment: Deirdre DesJardins (physicist at CA Water Research) commented that she disagreed with the outcome of the DWR-funded study showing a south Delta salinity standard deterioration would have no negative agricultural impacts.

8. Receive Report on Delta Watermaster Activities

Delta Watermaster Michael George provided a presentation on recent activities related to his office and Delta water quality, including recent appointments to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), development of Water Quality Control Plan amendments (including efforts related to voluntary agreements), progress on water diversion measurement and water right reporting, and deterioration of the southern Delta ecosystem. He also stated that the Commission should share any information on Delta salinity with SWRCB.

Commissioner Winn commented on the necessity to dredge southern Delta channels; Mr. George concurred and stated the importance of larger entities working the issue as it is very difficult for individual farmers to do so.

Chair Villegas asked for public comment and there was none.

9. Receive Report on Delta Socioeconomic Indicators Project

Commission Program Manager Melinda Dorin provided background information on the Socioeconomic Indicators project, which is intended to capture measures of social and economic well-being in the Delta region and track these measures over time; the next opportunity to track these measures will be after the release of the 2020 U.S. Census data. She highlighted some of the indicators presented in an information graphic, which received favorable comments from several Commission members.

Chair Villegas asked for public comment and there was none.

10. Consider Commission Comment Letter on Transfer of Staten Island Property to Wetlands Preservation Foundation

At the start of the meeting, Executive Director Vink requested this item be deferred to a later meeting. Chair Villegas approved the removal of this item from the agenda.

11. Commissioner Comments/Announcements

The next Commission meeting will be on September 19 in Clarksburg.

12. Adjourn

Chair Villegas adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.